

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1                   1.       A method of providing financial responsibility for a transaction  
2   between a first trader certified by a first certificate authority and a second trader certified by a  
3   second certificate authority, wherein said transaction is based on a communication for a  
4   product communicated between said first trader and said second trader and wherein said first  
5   trader and said second trader have no common certificate authority, said method comprising:  
6                   receiving at a trust bridge a certificate for said first trader issued by said first  
7   certificate authority;  
8                   receiving at said trust bridge a certificate for said second trader issued by said  
9   second certificate authority;  
10                  providing validation of said first trader to said second trader by said trust  
11   bridge;  
12                  providing financial responsibility for incorrect validation of said first trader to  
13   said second trader by said trust bridge.

1                   2.       The method as described in claim 1 and further comprising:  
2   providing validation of said second trader to said first trader by said trust  
3   bridge.

1                   3.       The method as described in claim 2 and further comprising:  
2   providing financial responsibility for incorrect validation of said second trader  
3   to said first trader by said trust bridge.

1                   4.       The method as described in claim 1 wherein said first certificate  
2   authority provides financial responsibility for incorrect validation of said first trader to said  
3   trust bridge.

1                   5.       The method as described in claim 4 wherein said second certificate  
2   authority provides financial responsibility for an incorrect validation of said second trader to  
3   said trust bridge.

1                   6.       The method as described in claim 1 wherein said second certificate  
2   authority provides financial responsibility for an incorrect validation of said second trader to  
3   said trust bridge.



13. The method as described in claim 1 wherein said providing financial responsibility for incorrect validation of said first trader comprises basing said financial responsibility on the validity of a certificate of said first trader.

14. The method as described in claim 1 and further comprising:  
providing a trust bridge practice statement for an entity which uses said trust bridge so as to define financial responsibility limits of said trust bridge.

15. The method as described in claim 14 wherein said first certificate authority provides a certification practice statement for an entity which uses said first certificate authority so as to define financial responsibility limits of said first certificate authority.

16. A method of establishing authentication between at least a first party and a second party, said method comprising:

certifying said first party with a first certificate authority;

certifying said second party with a second certificate authority different from said first certificate authority;

certifying a third party with said first certificate authority;

certifying said third party with said second certificate authority;

conveying a message from said first party to said third party such that said third party can authenticate said message from said first party;

conveying said message from said third party to said second party such that said second party can authenticate said message from said third party;

allowing said first certification authority to provide financial responsibility for an incorrect certification of said first party; and

providing financial responsibility by said third party to said second party for incorrect validation of a certificate issued by said first party.

17. The method as described in claim 16 and further comprising:  
receiving at said third party a certificate revocation list for said first  
certification authority;  
receiving at said third party a certificate revocation list for said second  
certification authority;  
utilizing said certificate revocation list for said first certification authority and  
said certificate revocation list for said second certification authority to compile a master  
certificate revocation list.

18. The method as described in claim 16 and further comprising:  
providing a trust bridge practice statement for an entity which uses said third  
party so as to define financial responsibility limits of said third party to said entity.

19. A method of providing non-repudiation of a communication from a  
first trader certified by a first certification authority to a second trader certified by a second  
certification authority, wherein said communication is for a product and wherein said first  
trader and said second trader have no common certification authority, said method  
comprising:

receiving certification of a trust bridge from said first certificate authority;  
receiving certification of said trust bridge from said second certificate  
authority;

receiving at said trust bridge said communication from said first trader to said  
second trader via said trust bridge;

establishing non-repudiation of said communication from said first trader to  
said second trader with said trust bridge.

20. The method as described in claim 19 wherein said establishing non-  
repudiation of said communication comprises:

conveying said communication to said second party with a digital signature of said first trader and a digital signature of said trust bridge.

21. The method as described in claim 20 wherein said establishing non-repudiation of said communication comprises:

receiving at said trust bridge said communication with a digital signature of said second trader.

22. The method as described in claim 19 wherein said establishing non-repudiation of said communication comprises:

receiving at said trust bridge an origination time stamp coupled to said communication.

23. The method as described in claim 19 wherein said establishing non-repudiation of said communication comprises:

receiving at said trust bridge a delivery time stamp for said communication.

24. The method as described in claim 19 wherein said establishing non-repudiation of said communication comprises:

storing a copy of said communication at said trust bridge.

25. The method as described in claim 24 wherein said establishing non-repudiation of said communication comprises:

storing a digital signature of said first trader coupled to said copy of said communication.

26. A method of establishing a trust between at least a first party and a second party, said method comprising:

certifying said first party with a first certificate authority;

certifying said second party with a second certificate authority different from said first certificate authority;

6 certifying a third party with said first certificate authority;  
7 certifying said third party with said second certificate authority;  
8 conveying a message from said first party to said third party such that said  
9 third party can authenticate said message from said first party;  
10 conveying said message from said third party to said second party such that  
11 said second party can authenticate said message from said third party;  
12 utilizing said third party as a trust bridge to establish a trust relationship  
13 between said first party and said second party.

27. A method of establishing authentication between at least a first party  
and a second party, said method comprising:

certifying said first party with a first certificate authority;  
certifying said second party with a second certificate authority different from  
said first certificate authority;

certifying a third party with said first certificate authority between said first  
party and said third party;

certifying said third party with said second certificate authority;  
conveying a message from said first party to said third party, such that said  
third party can authenticate said message from said first party;

conveying said message from said third party to said second party, such that  
said second party can authenticate said message from said third party.

28. A computer readable medium having computer executable instructions  
for performing a method of establishing a trust between at least a first party and a second  
party, said method comprising:

receiving certification at a computer from a first certificate authority, wherein  
said first certificate authority also certifies said first party;

receiving certification at said computer by a second certificate authority,  
wherein said second certificate authority also certifies said second party;

